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SUBJECT: KAZAKHSTAN: 2008 COUNTRY REPORTS ON TERRORISM

REF: STATE 120019

¶1. (U) Sensitive but unclassified. Not for public Internet.

¶2. (SBU) SUMMARY: Kazakhstan continued to combat domestic terrorism and extremism aggressively and took tangible steps to continue cooperation and information-sharing with the United States and international organizations. Kazakhstan also continued to strengthen its engagement in international counterterrorism activities. Kazakhstan has continued to detain and prosecute suspected terrorists, as well as to promote domestic counterterrorism activities. With the addition of one international organization, the Islamic Party of Turkistan, to the list of banned terrorist organizations of 2007, the Government of Kazakhstan now designates 16 groups as banned terrorist and extremist organizations. The full text of post's 2008 Country Report on Terrorism is attached in paragraphs 3-7. END SUMMARY.

¶3. (SBU) Kazakhstan continued to combat domestic terrorism and extremism aggressively and took tangible steps to improve cooperation and information-sharing related to counterterrorism activities with the United States and other international partners. In April, the Kazakhstani Committee for National Security (KNB) announced plans to submit a strict new law, "On Counteracting Terrorism," to parliament that would replace the current law, adopted in 1999. At the time, the KNB stated the bill was included in the government's legislative plan and would be submitted to Parliament in 2008. However, as of December 23, parliament had not yet approved the new law. Kazakhstan's Prime Minister instructed the Minister of Finance to speed up drafting a bill on combating financing of terrorism in June, however, the draft law on terrorism finance remained stalled in Parliament, as previously reported in [¶2007](#).

¶4. (SBU) Kazakhstan continued to strengthen its engagement in international counterterrorism activities. In March, the Government of Kazakhstan approved a treaty with the Government of the Slovak Republic on cooperation in fighting terrorism. In April, President Nursultan Nazarbayev signed two draft laws on counterterrorism activities within the framework of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). In May, President Nazarbayev also ratified the

"International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism," which was previously adopted by the United Nations in 2005. In June, Kazakhstan hosted a Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism "Anti-Atom Terror" exercise attended by more than 15 member nations. In August, the Government of Kazakhstan approved the signing of a treaty with the Government of the United Arab Emirates on cooperation in fighting against terrorism. In September, Kazakhstan hosted a "Design-Basis Threat" exercise attended by seven partners from the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism. Kazakhstan also hosted the Common World Forum in October to promote intercultural and inter-religious dialogues.

15. (SBU) Kazakhstan has continued to detain and prosecute suspected terrorists. In February, a court in Stepnorgorsk sentenced two members of an extremist group to 12 years of imprisonment and six others to nine years of imprisonment for planning to commit terrorist attacks in the fall of 2006. In March, a court in Shymkent sentenced 15 members of a terrorist group, detained in April 2007 on charges of organizing terrorist acts against the local office of the Kazakhstani Committee for National Security (KNB), to prison terms ranging from 11-19 years. House searches of the convicts revealed hidden explosives, guns, ammunition and religious literature, along with a detailed plan of the local KNB building and a list with KNB officers' and their family members' home phone numbers and addresses. In March, the KNB also detained a resident from the town of Rudnyy. After a search of the accused's home revealed discs containing films of an extremist nature, a Kostanay court sentenced him to two years in prison for promoting terrorism. On October 31, the U.S. Department of Defense released the last Kazakhstani national detained in the Guantanamo Bay detention facility into the custody of the Government of Kazakhstan. The Government of Kazakhstan did not institute any legal proceedings against him and allowed him to return freely to his home village, accompanied by his uncle. In November, police in the southern Zhambyl District of Almaty detained an Uzbek citizen, allegedly wanted for membership in religious extremist, separatist and fundamentalist organizations. According to the Almaty Region's prosecutor, police placed the detainee under arrest, pending a decision on his extradition to Uzbekistan.

16. (SBU) Kazakhstan has promoted intercultural and religious dialogues designed to prevent radicalization and supported other domestic counterterrorism initiatives. In August, the Ministry of Interior and the People's Assembly of Kazakhstan signed a memorandum on cooperation in strengthening interethnic and interfaith relations within Kazakhstani society. In December, the Ministry of Justice opened an International Center of Culture and Religions to study the positive experience of interfaith and interethnic cooperation in Kazakhstan. In 2008, Kazakhstan also enacted five interagency regulatory legal acts regulating the counterterrorism activities of public bodies and conducted 149 interagency counterterrorism exercises and training programs.

17. (SBU) In Kazakhstan, organizations which are typically referred to as "terrorist" groups are divided into extremist organizations and terrorist organizations. The Islamic extremist group Hizb ut-Tahrir (HT) remains the only organization designated and outlawed as "extremist" under the "Law on Extremism." As described in 2007, the list of 14 terrorist organizations had remained unchanged since 2006. However, in March, the Astana City Court added the Islamic Party of Turkistan to the list, increasing the list to 15 banned terrorist organizations. The Government of Kazakhstan now designates 16 groups as banned terrorist and extremist organizations.

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